

computer equipment and services for the whole government. The Sun Microsystems contract was being re-negotiated right under his nose. He was the top official accountable for that contract. When he was informed in August 2006 by IG auditors about the alleged fraud on the Sun contract and the DOJ referral decision, he should have brought the Sun contract negotiations to a screeching halt. He should have called for a comprehensive, independent review and/or audit and assessment of Sun's corrective action plan. He should have carefully weighed the gravity of the fraud allegations before proceeding any further.

Mr. Chairman, instead of heeding all the IG's warning signals, Mr. Williams pushed the throttle to the firewall at Administrator Doan's direction. The record shows pressure was put on the contracting officer to sign a potentially bad contract. When the contracting officer refused to bend under pressure, Mr. Williams involved himself directly in the contracting process. He participated in the decision to remove that contracting officer from the Sun contract negotiations. His actions eliminated the last standing barrier to contract approval. In doing these things, he may have improperly interfered in the contracting process and hurt the taxpayers.

The alleged contract violations and alleged fraud on the Sun contract, which supposedly occurred over a long period of time, may have wasted tens of millions of dollars in taxpayer money. Mr. Chairman, there must be more accountability in the government contracting process. Elevating those who have been detrimental to this process would certainly be anti-accountability and anti-taxpayer. That would clearly send the wrong message to the whole contracting community.

For these reasons, I intend to oppose the nomination of Mr. Williams to be the next Administrator at GSA, and would expect your Committee to do so, too.

Your careful consideration of my concerns would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,
Ranking Member.

CYPRUS

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, on July 20, 1974, Turkey invaded Cyprus. Thirty four years later, Turkish troops continue to occupy 37 percent of the land on Cyprus. During the occupation, some 180,000 Cypriots became refugees and over 5,000 Cypriots were murdered.

The European Court of Human Rights recently found Turkey guilty of violating the European Convention on Human Rights. Notably, 26 year-old Solomos Solomou, was killed on August 14, 1996 after being shot three times by Turkish snipers while trying to climb a pole in order to remove a Turkish flag from its mast. The killing happened after the funeral of his cousin, Tassos Isaak, who was himself beaten to death on August 11, 1996 by a Turkish mob while taking part in an anti-occupation demonstration.

On March 12th of this year, I sent a congratulatory letter to the newly elected Cypriot President Christofias. In addition to a new President in the Republic of Cyprus, his election represents a new direction for the Republic of Cyprus. I commend President Christofias for the intensification of ef-

forts to reach a just, viable, and functional solution to the Cyprus problem. I believe this is a unique time to capitalize on the commitment made to find a solution and I am optimistic that the working groups and technical committees will prepare the necessary groundwork for full-fledged negotiation. However, I also believe that any solution that will reunite the island, its people, its institutions and its economy and must come from the Cypriots themselves.

On September 25, 2007, I introduced S. Res. 331, which calls on the United States Government to initiate a new effort to help Turkey understand the benefits that will accrue to it as a result of ending its military occupation of Cyprus. In addition, the resolution urges the Government of Turkey to immediately begin the withdrawal of its military occupation forces. Ultimately, it is on their shoulders to prove their good will and I hope they do so promptly.

As Cypriot-Americans join with Cypriots from throughout the world to help to rebuild their homeland, and as they seek to secure an economically prosperous state free of illegal occupation, I will stand by them. I will work to ensure that the Turkish occupation comes to an end.

This week, we remember those who perished on Cyprus, and honor those who survived and who continue to live under Turkish occupation. We have not forgotten and our thoughts and prayers are with them and their families.

Remembering together the events of July 20, 1974 in solidarity gives reverence to historical events we cannot afford to forget as we move forward to a peaceful, just solution and a hopeful tomorrow.

REMEMBERING SENATOR JESSE HELMS

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, today we remember and celebrate the life of the great Senator from North Carolina, Jesse Helms.

Senator Helms dedicated much of his life to serving his country and the people of North Carolina. He developed a lasting legacy as a man who held to his convictions and championed the causes he believed in so deeply.

He began his career in the U.S. Navy during World War II, where he was assigned as a recruiter. After the war, he became involved in North Carolina politics and campaigned for Senator Willis Smith, later serving on his staff. Senator Helms continued to establish himself, working as a political commentator for local Raleigh newspapers and radio stations. In 1957, Senator Helms was elected to the Raleigh city council, where he served with the same conviction that he would later bring to the Senate.

He was first elected to the Senate in 1972 and was reelected four more times, making him the longest serving U.S. Senator in North Carolina history. He

quickly became known for his unfailing dedication to uphold traditional American values and protect freedom. He said, "The challenge is always before us. Whenever we lose sight of the principles that mattered to our founders we run into trouble."

During his tenure in the Senate, Helms served on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and was chairman from 1995 to 2001. Under his leadership, the committee played a powerful role in setting U.S. foreign policy.

Senator Helms will be greatly missed and remembered as one of the most influential Senators of his time.

TRIBUTE TO DON MITCHELL

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, last week marked the end of a distinguished and honorable career in Government service for one of the most widely respected professional staff members on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. Today, I wish to pay tribute to this gentleman—Mr. Don Mitchell.

For over 24 years, Don Mitchell devoted his life to public service. Remarkably, except for a 2-year period when he served as the Director of Intelligence Programs for the National Security Council, 22 of those years were spent here in the Senate, first as a national security legislative assistant for Senator John Glenn and then as a professional staff member for the Intelligence Committee. Senator Glenn knew a good thing when he saw it, so in 1989, he asked Don to move to the Intelligence Committee staff. As they say, the rest is history.

In a world where politics often seems to define who we are and with whom we associate, Don transcended those barriers. He earned the respect of Members and colleagues on both sides of the aisle. His work ethic—often evidenced by long days and late nights—was admired by all. It comes as no surprise that Don's reputation is well known not only here in the Senate but throughout the intelligence community with whom he worked so closely through the years. During my tenure on the Intelligence Committee, and in particular since becoming the vice chairman, I have benefited from Don's expertise and seasoned judgment in analyzing some of our most sensitive national security programs. We have been fortunate to have him for so many years.

We all know that the demands of working here in Congress often take the greatest toll on those who support us and sustain us in life—our families. For selflessly giving Don to us for so many years, his wife Grace, son Logan, and daughter Ella deserve our gratitude. We thank them for their sacrifices through these many years.

Ensuring our great Nation's security is a high calling and one of tremendous responsibility. Through his service to the Intelligence Committee, the Senate, and the United States of America, Don Mitchell has answered this call